

Cyprus

Facts and Statistics

Location: Middle East, island in the Mediterranean Sea, south of Turkey

Capital: Nicosia

Climate: temperate; Mediterranean with hot, dry summers and cool winters

Population: 775,927 (July 2004 est.)

Ethnic Make-up: Greek 77%, Turkish 18%, other 5% (2001)

Religions: Greek Orthodox 78%, Muslim 18%, Maronite, Armenian Apostolic, and other 4%

Government: republic

Languages in Cyprus

Of the estimated 736,000 population of the island, around 13% speak the official language Turkish, and 84% speak the official language Greek. The island is divided into two, and the Cypriot Turks live to the north, the Greek Cypriots to the south. Around 2.7% of each also speak the minority languages Armenian and Arabic, and most of these also speak Greek.

Cypriot Society & Culture

Cypriot Family Values

- . The family is the centre of the social structure.
- . The family includes the nuclear family and the extended family.
- . The extended family is expected to help their relatives.
- . Both maternal and paternal grandfathers have strong bonds with their grandchildren.
- . Elders are respected and children expect to take care of their parents when as they become old and or infirmed.

Hierarchical Society

- . Cypriots are extremely respectful of hierarchy, which can be traced through back to their two main religions, Islam in Turkish Cyprus and Greek Orthodox in Greek Cyprus.
- . People are respected because of their age and position. Older people are viewed as wise and are granted respect.
- . The oldest person in a group is revered and honored. In a social situation, they are served and introduced first.

Religion in Cyprus

- . Although predominantly Christian and Muslim, freedom of religion is safeguarded in the Cyprus constitution.
- . The majority of Greek Cypriots belong to the Greek Orthodox Church. The Church of Cyprus is one of the oldest autocephalous churches and recognizes the ecumenical patriarch in Constantinople and retains administrative autonomy under its own archbishop.
- . In small villages, women attend services more frequently than men, and elderly family members are usually responsible for fulfilling religious duties on behalf of the whole family.
- . Church attendance is less frequent in cities and among educated Cypriots. For much of the population, religion centers on rituals at home, veneration of icons, and observance of certain feast days of the

Orthodox calendar

- . The majority of Turkish Cypriots are Muslims.

- . Among certain obligations for Muslims are to pray five times a day - at dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset, and evening.

- . During the holy month of Ramadan all Muslims must fast from dawn to dusk and are only permitted to work six hours per day. Fasting includes no eating, drinking, cigarette smoking, or gum chewing. Expatriates are not required to fast; however, they must not eat, drink, smoke, or chew gum in public.